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Mr. Coolidge concludes, however, that, if it really be such, it refers either to Simler's experience in some ascent made before he was fourteen years old to a hill-top near his native village, or, later, to heights in the immediate vicinity of Zurich—in any event, to no truly Alpine peak. He has, however, "risen above his contemporaries by editing an Alpine Encyclopedia, and so has deserved well of all those, climbers or not, who regard the Alps as the finest region on earth."

Vindicating thus Simler's title to regard as the father of modern mountaineering, the author does not hesitate to gather about the *Commentary* all that was known, and, so far as it has been discovered, all that was thought, about mountain ascents previous to the year 1600.

In the forefront is set the now famous letter of Dr. Conrad Gesner to his friend Avienus (Jacob Vogel) on "The Love of Mountains" (*De Montium Admirazione*), written in 1541—"a letter constituting one of the charters of alpinism"—reproduced in the original Latin and in translation. The "Introduction" (190 pages) consists, first, of an historical sketch of mountaineering under three sub-titles: (A) Ascents of peaks; (B) Traversings of snow-passes; (C) Practical Mountaineering. Under C are discussed (1) the mountain *per se*; (2) the mountaineer upon his peak, with subdivisions: (a) his implements, (b) his amusements ("fantaisies"), glissading, name-carving (for, alas! this whim dates back beyond 1555), tobogganing, rolling down rocks, and blowing on Alpine horns, and (c) his guides—a chapter naturally much resembling that on "Snakes in Iceland." As a specimen of the interesting facts collated, we may mention the following: "Originally alpine horns were used by the herdsmen in chanting their prayers; this custom still exists in châlets on the slopes of the Pilatus range."

Section A presents, doubtless, the most complete register to be consulted of ascents in the Alps previous to 1600. Yet of even greater interest are the original documents, eighteen in number, from which our knowledge of these expeditions is derived. First in order is the page from Livy describing the ascent of the Hæmus (9,300 feet) in the Balkan Peninsula, made by Philip V. of Macedon in 181 B.C. Among those that follow are the full text of a long Latin letter of Petrarch, describing his ascent of Mont Ventoux in 1336, and his emotions and religious meditations on that occasion; the ascent in 1492 of "le Mont Inaccessible," as it was named and believed to be, Mont-Aiguille, near Grenoble, by the Seigneur de Dompjulien, by order of the sovereign, King Charles VIII. (this is the first recorded ascent of a really audacious character accomplished by the aid of "*subtilz engins*," ladders, and the like); again, a brief note by Leonardo da Vinci touching the phenomena observed by this versatile genius in his ascent of Monte Bô (8,520 feet), made about the year 1511.

The remaining portions of the book are devoted to a biographical sketch of Simler, and to elaborate and most interesting notes both on the *Commentary* itself and on the annexed documents. To these, although they represent, doubtless, the most exacting and laborious work involved in this monumental publication, we can merely allude in passing. Reproductions of portraits of Simler, Gesner, Tschudi, and Stumpf from contemporary sources, the facsimile of a letter written from the summit of Mont-Aiguille by Dompjulien to the President of the Parliament of Grenoble, a map of the Bernese Oberland dating from 1578, and a few other interesting illustrations, twelve in all, add to the value of this notable volume.

C. E. F.

**XX., XXI., XXXII. u. XXXIII. Jahresbericht (1901, 1902, 1903 u. 1904) des württembergischen Vereins für Handelsgeographie.**  
Stuttgart, 1905.

The contents of this report on the work of the Society during the period embraced

by the first four years of this century are interesting. Leaving aside the official sections, we meet with three papers (lectures), all of which can be sincerely commended. The first one is of less direct interest on this side of the Atlantic than the others, treating, as it does, of Bosnian forests and Bosnian cultivated areas, but the style of writing of its author, Dr. Vogel of Stuttgart, is pleasing and, to a fair extent, plastic, and it conveys much interesting information on parts of Bosnia comparatively little known.

The second: Impressions of Travel from the Department of Ancachs in Peru, by Dr. Hugo Debach at Schaffhausen, is even more attractively written. The Department of Ancachs is famous for its mines, and its orography was hitherto only known through the work of Raimondi: "*El Departamento de Ancachs y sus Riquezas minerales*" (Lima, 1873), and especially by the map accompanying it. Dr. Debach well characterizes the two important mountain chains that traverse the greatest part of the Department from north to south (approximately), and parallel to each other, the *Cordillera negra*, or coast range, and the *Cordillera blanca*, farther inland, a towering snow-clad chain, the summits of which attain an elevation of as many as 22,000 feet. The great abruptness of the former towards the east is a feature not met with in all the sections of the Peruvian coast range. Dr. Debach's landscape pictures are pleasing to read, although (as German literature of a modern date in general) they are still far from the well-tempered poetry, coupled with accurate description, peculiar to the style of Humboldt and Gustav Radde. Ethnography, of course, enters into the frame, and it is only to be regretted that the author knows the Indian so little, and looks at his past through the eye-glasses of ordinary school routine. It is a very commendable effort, however—the more so as it places before us pictures of a region little known to the general public.

The lecture by Dr. A. Hahl on the geography of the German colonial area of New Guinea concerns us more directly, as treating of clusters of islands in the vicinity of our Philippines. A cursory glance at these groups, like the Carolines, Marianas, and others, it still is well worthy of careful reading. The ethnographic picture is somewhat confused, and the linguistic part of it attempts subdivisions, with technical terms perhaps too technical for the general public.

Very valuable are the reviews of a number of other lectures given at the Society's meetings in the four years referred to above. They enable the reader to form a very clear idea of their contents, testifying to the scrupulous care with which every review has been prepared.

A. F. B.

**The Maintenance of Health in the Tropics.** By W. J. Simpson, M.D. viii and 118 pp. and 14 Illustrations. John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, Ltd., London, 1905. (Price, 2s. 6d.)

Dr. Simpson wrote this Handbook at the request of the London School of Tropical Medicine, and it was published under their auspices. It deals with tropical hygiene in a simple and popular manner, treats of the characteristic diseases of the tropics, and gives special prominence to prevention and to protection against deleterious influences. The longest chapter is given to malarial fever and protection against the bites of mosquitoes. An important reduction in the rate of mortality among natives of the temperate zone living in the tropics has been observed for some years past. Medical men say this is due to the better knowledge acquired in the past two decades as to the hygiene to be observed in the equatorial regions. This book, written in the light of long experience, will be useful to those residing in or visiting the tropics.